

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-20 remain pending. Claims 1, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, and 17 are amended to address minor informalities and to conform the claims to U.S. patent practice. Claim 21 is added to secure an appropriate scope of protection to which Applicants are believed entitled.

The rejection of claims 1-3, 6, 9-10, and 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being unpatentable over Bentley et al. (U.S. Patent 5,914,951) is hereby traversed. A rejection based on 35 U.S.C. §102 requires every element of the claim to be included in the reference, either directly or inherently. The Office Action fails to identify all elements of claim 1 that are allegedly anticipated by Bentley. There are at least two reasons why the rejection is incorrect.

First, Bentley fails to disclose that the request sent by a first endpoint entity to a service system indicates the identity of an existing session as set forth in Applicants' claim 1. In the Abstract, Bentley describes customer access of a company computer system via a data network and requesting contact with a customer service representative. There is no description in Bentley of the customer contact request indicating the identity of the existing session to which the customer is already joined. For at least this reason, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 is in order. (Because Applicants are unable to find any description of the missing element, Applicants request

the Examiner to identify by column and line number where Bentley discloses the claimed subject matter

Second, Bentley fails to disclose a service system joining a selected assistant entity to a session. Applicants note that Bentley describes two separate contacts among the customer and the company and customer service representative, Bentley does not disclose the joining of a customer service representative to an existing session involving the customer. According to the Abstract and column 10, lines 15-19 and lines 26-29, Bentley "may use a CSR computer system . . . to initiate data communication with the customer computer system 18." Thus, Bentley fails to describe joining an assistant to an existing session. Rather, Bentley describes establishing a new session between the customer and the customer service representative. For at least this reason, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 is in order. (Again, if the rejection is maintained, Applicants request the Examiner to identify with specificity by column and line number where Bentley discloses claimed subject matter.

Based on either of the foregoing reasons, claim 1 is patentable over Bentley, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 2, 3, 6, 9, and 10 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1, include further important limitations, and are patentable over Bentley for at least the reasons advanced above with respect to claim 1.

With specific reference to claim 3, Bentley fails to disclose that the assistant entity is a software-based entity. Bentley describes a customer service representative communicating with a customer and transferring a software program to the customer.

The customer service representative is not described as being a software-based entity. For at least this additional reason, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 3 is in order.

With specific reference to claim 6, the second argument presented above with respect to claim 1 applies and is incorporated herein. For at least this additional reason, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 6 is in order.

With specific reference to claim 9, Bentley fails to disclose a generic behavior for adding and removing endpoint entities to the communication session. The Bentley-described adding, changing, or deleting of selection criteria is not the same as adding and removing endpoint entities to an existing session. For at least this additional reason, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 9 is in order. Further, in a Preliminary Amendment filed with the present application on October 16, 2001, claim 9 was amended to recite, "A method according to claim 1" and not "according to any one of claims 1 to 6."

With specific reference to claim 10, Bentley fails to disclose a transport mechanism associated with a communication session providing multiple data transfer channels, for different media types, between endpoint entities joined to the communication session. Bentley describes a voice system supporting multiple telephones and a telecommunication control device supporting multiple telephone calls; however, Bentley fails to describe either the voice system or telecommunication control device associated with a communication session and providing multiple data transfer channels between endpoint entities joined to the session. For at least this additional reason, the rejection of claim 10 should be withdrawn. Further, in a Preliminary

Amendment filed with the present application on October 16, 2001, claim 10 was amended to recite "A method according to claim 1" and not "according to any one of the preceding claims."

Claim 17 is patentable over Bentley for reasons similar to those advanced above with respect to claim 1. Specifically, Bentley fails to disclose that (1) the request from the first endpoint entity indicates the identity of the existing session, and (2) assistant-selection means joins the selected assistant entity to the existing session. For either of these reasons, claim 17 is patentable over Bentley, and withdrawal of the rejection is in order.

Claims 18 and 19 depend from claim 17, include further important limitations, and are patentable over Bentley for at least the reasons advanced above with respect to claim 17.

The rejection of claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 11-16, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bentley in view of Brown et al. (U.S. 6,385,646) is hereby traversed. Brown does not cure the deficiencies of Bentley. The arguments presented above with respect to claims 1 and 17 apply equally and are hereby incorporated herein with respect to claims 4, 5, 7, 8, and 11-16 and 20, respectively. For at least these reasons, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 11-16, and 20 is in order.

Claim 21 recites an assistant-selector configured to select an appropriate assistant entity from a group of possible assistant entities based on the context of the existing communication session responsive to receipt of a request by a request-

receiver, the assistant-selector being configured to cause the session entity to join the selected assistant entity to the session. Claim 21 is patentable over Bentley for reasons similar to those advanced above with respect to claim 17.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

To the extent necessary during prosecution, Applicants hereby request any required extension of time not otherwise requested and hereby authorize the Commissioner to charge any prescribed fees not otherwise provided for, including application processing, extension of time, and extra claims fees, to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,

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On April 13, 2005

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